National Biotech Development Policy

1765. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) by when National Biotech Development policy to chalk out a roadmap for future growth of biotech industry is likely to be announced in the country;

(b) what are the other issues that the proposed policy is going to be addressed;

(c) whether it also include the industry-academic interaction so as to make our biotech sector more effective in the international market;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the strategic plans the Ministry has to achieve US$ 5 billion revenue by 2010?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) the Draft National Biotech Development Strategy has been prepared by the Government and was put on the website of Department of Biotechnology for eliciting views of the Scientists, Industry, policy makers, students and General Public at large. Comments have been received and examined, inter-agency discussions have been held and the final draft is ready.

(b) The Draft Biotech Strategy is a comprehensive roadmap for addressing crosscutting issues related to human resource development, infrastructure strengthening, promotion of industry and trade, setting up of biotech parks, regulatory mechanism and public awareness, and an action plan for specific sub-sectors. The strategic action plan will direct the future priorities and activites in different sectors of biotechnolgoy.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir, industry academic interaction is one of the key features of the biotechnology action plan for taking innovation to product development. In the proposed strategy such interactions have been suggested to promote human resource development, research and development, technology development and transfer and product development through different public private partnership models. A Small Business Innovation Research Initiative (SBIRI) has been launched, specifically for the biotechnology sector, under which early stage pre proof-

of-concept research would be funded to an academic institute along with a industry partner. A new Centre of excellence scheme has also been initiated under which specialized centres/units are being established for innovative research leading to product and process development. These are being built around scientists with expertise in focused areas. Industrial partnerships are being encouraged.

(e) Special schemes for promoting the biotech industry have been launched-public private partnership funding, biotech parks, tax incentives etc. a simplified regulatory procedure have also been suggested in the proposed strategy and steps have been taken to simplify import of biologicals. Strategies for human resource development promoting innovations, infrastructure strengthening and industrial development are proposed in the Draft National Biotechnological development Strategy aim at developing a strong Biotech industry. These steps would encourage the industry to move forward at a greater pace and would facilitate product development through innovative research efforts thereby giving a boost to this sector.

Sea-level along western ghats

†1766. SHRI DEVDAS APTE: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a study conducted by Indian Meteorological Institute, Ahmedabad revealed heavy rains and rising in sea-level along western ghats in near future.

(b) whether it poses any threat to Konkan railways; and

(c) if so, Government's proposed plan to combat this threat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) No, Sir. India Meteorological Department (IMD) is not aware of any such specific study. Sea level rise is a global phenomenon related to climate change and is very gradual. According to Interagovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)- Third Assessment Report the anticipated rate of sea level rise is only a few mm per year. The sea level at a particular location changes with the tides on a daily basis and is not affected by events of heavy rainfall.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.